MARVEL

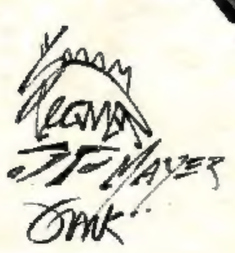
25

LGY#190

CATES
BAGLEY
OWENS
MARTIN

IN THIS ISSUE, A
VENOM
LETHAL PROTECTOR
REUNION IN THE MIGHTY MARVEL MANNER!

VENOM



DISGRACED REPORTER EDDIE BROCK STUMBLED UPON AN AGGRESSIVE ALIEN ORGANISM CALLED A SYMBIOTE DURING ONE OF THE LOWEST POINTS OF HIS LIFE. THE TWO WERE JOINED AND USED THEIR COMBINED LUST FOR VIOLENCE TO MAKE THEIR CITY SAFER AS THE LETHAL PROTECTOR...

VENOM

VENOM ISLAND: CONCLUSION

FOLLOWING THE EVENTS OF ABSOLUTE CARNAGE, EDDIE BROCK REALIZED THAT A POWERFUL EVIL HAD BECOME MALIGNANT WITHIN THE PSYCHE OF THE VENOM SYMBIOTE. RESOLVING TO CURE IT, EDDIE BORROWED A QUINJET FROM CAPTAIN AMERICA AND SET A COURSE FOR A DESERTED ISLAND HE AND THE SYMBIOTE HAD LIVED ON FOR A TIME.

BUT IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE THE DARKNESS WITHIN HIS SYMBIOTE MADE ITS PRESENCE AND NAME KNOWN: **CARNAGE**, WHO BROUGHT EDDIE'S PLANE DOWN IN A VIOLENT CRASH.

AFTER A NARROW ESCAPE THAT COST HIM HIS LEFT HAND, BROCK WAS SEEMINGLY RESCUED BY THE AVENGERS, WHO PROMPTLY NUKED THE ISLAND TO ERADICATE THE SYMBIOTES STILL ON IT.

MEANWHILE, UNAWARE OF ANY OF THIS, EDDIE'S SON, DYLAN, HAS DISCOVERED A UNIQUE ABILITY TO TRACK AND CONTROL SYMBIOTES, WHICH HE HAS USED TO TRACK EDDIE DOWN–ONLY TO LEARN A TERRIBLE TRUTH:

EDDIE NEVER LEFT THE ISLAND AT ALL. INSTEAD, HE HAS BEEN BONDED AGAINST HIS WILL TO THE REBORN CARNAGE SYMBIOTE...AND DYLAN AND VENOM ARE THE ONLY ONES WHO CAN SAVE HIM!

YOU KNOW...

I HEAR WHAT YOU ALL SAY ABOUT ME.

ABOUT *US.*

AND IT'S FINE. HONESTLY, I'VE BEEN HEARING THE SAME QUESTION SINCE THIS ALL STARTED...

HELL, I EVEN HEARD IT FROM MY KID.

"IS VENOM A GOOD GUY...

"...OR A BAD GUY?"

I GET IT. I DO.

I KNOW WE CAN BE... YOU KNOW... A LITTLE ***ERRATIC.***

WE'VE BEEN ON BOTH SIDES OF THE LINE SO MANY TIMES EVEN I CAN'T KEEP TRACK.

IT'S A FAIR QUESTION IS WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY.

AND THE ANSWER...

I DON'T KNOW.

IT'S NOT THAT EASY...

WHEN THIS ALL STARTED... WHEN I FIRST GOT THE SYMBIOTE AND...GAVE MYSELF THIS "COOL" NAME, I...

LORD HELP ME, I THOUGHT-- I THOUGHT I WAS DOING THE RIGHT THING.

I GENUINELY THOUGHT THAT KILLING SPIDER-MAN WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

I HONESTLY DID.

AND LOOKING BACK AT IT NOW... GOD...

WHAT WAS WRONG WITH ME?

I KNOW. I KNOW. THAT DOESN'T ANSWER THE QUESTION, RIGHT?

BUT... IT KINDA DOES.

YOU ASK ME IF I'M A GOOD GUY OR A BAD GUY, AND, WELL...

I MEAN, IF I DIDN'T THINK I WAS A BAD GUY WHEN I WAS TRYING TO ***KILL SPIDER-MAN,*** HOW CAN I TRUST MYSELF TO ANSWER IT NOW?

I THINK THE TRUTH IS THAT I...

I ***SO*** WANT TO BE. I WANT PEOPLE TO LOOK AT ME THE WAY THEY LOOK AT HIM. AT SPIDER-MAN. I'VE SEEN IT.

THEY SEE HIM, AND THEY KNOW ***EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE OKAY.***

THEY LOOK AT ME AND...

I DON'T KNOW.

MAYBE I DON'T THINK I'M GOOD ENOUGH OF A GUY TO BE A GOOD GUY.

BUT...I'M TRYING. ***WE'RE*** TRYING.

EVERY DAY.

AND HELL, I MEAN...BEFORE I GO ANY FURTHER, CAN WE AGREE THAT IT'S BEEN AN INSANE FEW YEARS FOR US?

"RIGHT UP TOP, I LOST MY JOB. I WAS BROKE AND LOSING MY MIND AND...

"...I WAS LOSING *EVERYTHING.*

"FOR THE SECOND TIME IN MY LIFE, THE UNIVERSE OPENED UP AND DROPPED A JET-BLACK NIGHTMARE INTO MY LIFE...

"THAT WAS... ROUGH.

"AND THEN WE LEARNED ABOUT THE GOD OF THE SYMBIOTES...

"ABOUT... WELL...

"I'LL...I'LL GET TO THAT IN A BIT...

"IN THE END...WE WERE ABLE TO PUSH HIM BACK, BUT...

"I LOST MY OTHER IN THE PROCESS.

"LOST ITS VOICE...

"THAT WAS...THAT WAS A REALLY DARK TIME FOR ME.

"OUT OF CONTROL.

"ALONE."

I...

I DON'T DO WELL WITH BEING ALONE.

"AND THEN THERE WAS ***THE MAKER.***

"HE CAME IN TO OUR LIFE AND RIPPED ***EVERYTHING*** APART.

"MADE ME QUESTION EVERYTHING I EVER KNEW.

"MADE ME FACE THE TRUTH.

"FACE MY DEMON."

AND THEN...

WELL...

"...IT HASN'T BEEN ALL BAD."

I HAVE A SON. HIS NAME IS DYLAN.

HE'S... HE'S MY WHOLE WORLD.

HE LOOKS AT ME LIKE THAT.

YOU KNOW... HOW PEOPLE LOOK AT ***HIM.*** AT SPIDER-MAN.

I'M NOT EXACTLY FATHER OF THE YEAR OR NOTHING, BUT...

HE THINKS I'M A GOOD GUY, I THINK.

SO...Y'KNOW... THAT'S BEEN-- THAT'S BEEN GOOD, ACTUALLY.

CHALLENGING. BUT...GOOD.

THE REST OF THE YEAR THOUGH...

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"FIRST A BUNCH OF ***GOBLINS AND FAIRY-TALE MONSTERS*** FELL OUT OF THE SKY.

"THAT ONE WASN'T EVEN MY FAULT.

"BUT STILL, I GOT INFECTED BY THIS DREAM STONE THING AND TURNED INTO AN ASGARDIAN WARRIOR.

"AND THEN...

"WELL, I'M SURE I DON'T NEED TO REMIND YOU ABOUT THE RESURRECTION OF CLETUS KASADY.

"THAT'S WHY I'M HERE, ACTUALLY.

"THE...WELL, THE FALLOUT OF THAT.

"THE WHOLE CARNAGE EVENT...IT DIDN'T EXACTLY END WHEN IT ENDED..."

BUT...I'M GETTING AHEAD OF MYSELF.

I HAVE A LOT TO TELL YOU ABOUT WHAT'S COMING NEXT.

I...I HAVEN'T BEEN...WELL, I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH.

BUT I WANTED TO SAY THANK YOU. TO ALL OF YOU.

I KNOW THINGS HAVE BEEN...INSANE. THAT I HAVEN'T ALWAYS BEEN AT MY BEST...

BUT, FOR GOOD OR BAD, YOU'VE SEEN SOMETHING IN ME THAT I CAN'T SEE IN MYSELF.

AND YOU'VE STUCK WITH ME.

ANYWAY.

WHERE WAS I?

SO. YEAH...

THANK YOU.

OH. RIGHT. THE ISLAND THING.

"SO, YEAH. MY SON HAD JUST REMOTE-PILOTED MY SYMBIOTE AND TURNED IT INTO A TYRANNOSAURUS REX AND I WAS BEING CONTROLLED BY THE CARNAGE SYMBIOTE AND WE WERE FIGHTING TO THE DEATH ON A DESERTED ISLAND.

"LIKE I SAID...

"...IT'S BEEN A ROUGH FEW YEARS."

DAD! DAD, CAN YOU HEAR ME IN THERE?

BOOM

IT'S ME, DAD. IT'S DYLAN.

I'M HERE.

WHAT... WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?!

I...I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH LONGER I CAN...HOLD THIS FORM!

IS THIS A JOKE?!

DAD! PLEASE, ARE YOU IN THERE?!

I NEED YOU TO WAKE UP!

YOU WANNA PLAY?!

DAD!

LET'S PLAY!

AGHH!

AGHH!

DYLAN?

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DYLAN?!

DAD.

YOU NEED TO LISTEN TO ME.

NO. NO, THIS ISN'T REAL. YOU AREN'T REAL.

HE'S DOING IT AGAIN. HE'S PLAYING WITH ME.

NO. NO, DAD, I'M HERE.

I CAN GET YOU OUT OF HERE!

THIS IS...

THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE. HOW CAN YOU BE HERE? THIS IS...MY MIND. I DON'T--

I...I'VE BEEN HIDING SOMETHING FROM YOU.

I... I HAVE *POWERS.* I THINK. I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS.

"IT STARTED WHEN THE CARNAGE SYMBIOTE ATTACKED US.*

"I WAS...TRYING TO PROTECT NORMIE, AND I JUST..."

*BACK IN ABSOLUTE CARNAGE #5, VENOMANIACS! --DEVIN

I LOST CONTROL.

I WENT SOMEWHERE ELSE, AND WHEN I OPENED MY EYES...

"...IT WAS GONE."

I SHOULD HAVE TOLD YOU. I DON'T KNOW ***WHAT*** I AM... AND I...

I...I WAS JUST SCARED. I STILL AM.

I'M SCARED ALL THE TIME.

OH, DYLAN...NO. NO, I NEVER WANTED THIS FOR YOU. I DIDN'T--

RAGGHH!!!

I CAN HEAR YOU IN THERE, LITTLE BOY! YOU THINK YOU CAN SAVE YOUR DADDY?! YOU THINK YOU'RE SAFE IN THERE?!

DYLAN, RUN! SEVER THE CONNECTION NOW BEFORE--

KNOCK KNOCK!!!

ROOOOAAARR!

AH!

WELL WELL WELL

NO!

UNF!

UNF!

DYLAN, NO!

NO, NO! DYLAN! DYLAN, TALK TO ME!

AWW, LOOK AT THIS.

PAPA AND ALL HIS BOYS.

AGH!!! DYLAN!

IT... BURNS!

YOU HAVE TO WAKE UP! I CAN'T HOLD YOU!

DYLAN, YOU HAVE TO SEVER YOUR CONNECTION!

SSSSSSSS

N-NO!

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DYLAN, LISTEN TO ME, SON!

HEY!

YOU KNOW, IF I DIDN'T KNOW ANY BETTER, I'D SWEAR YOU WERE PLAYING FAVORITES!

THAT'S NOT VERY--

--NICE!

AGHH!

AAGH!

LISTEN TO ME, SON.

YOU CAN DO THIS.

I KNOW IT HURTS.

I KNOW BECAUSE I'VE BEEN WHERE YOU ARE.

I'VE BEEN LOST IN THOSE WATERS AND I KNOW HOW EASY IT CAN BE TO GIVE IN AND LET THEM TAKE YOU, BUT YOU HAVE GOT TO *FIGHT!*

"YOU CAN'T LET IT WRAP ITSELF AROUND YOUR HEART, DYLAN.

"CAN'T LET THE SHADOW INTO YOUR SOUL.

GOT YOU!

DYLAN, WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT ARE YOU--

"I'M NOT GOING TO TELL YOU THIS IS GOING TO BE EASY.

"AND I'M NOT GOING TO TELL YOU THAT I'M NOT SCARED.

"BECAUSE I AM. ALL THE TIME.

"I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU ARE EITHER. AND I DON'T CARE."

I KNOW YOU'RE MY SON.

AND I KNOW WE CAN BEAT THIS.

BECAUSE WE'RE STRONGER WHEN WE AREN'T ALONE.

NGGGHHHHH--

AGHH!!!

AGHHH!

RAGH!

BOOOOM

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NOOO!

AGHH!!!

BOOOOOM

AGH!

BOOOOOM

AH!

EDDIE! YOU'RE OKAY!

YEAH. YEAH...I'M-- I'M FINE. ARE YOU--

I'M SORRY WE COULDN'T--

HEY, IT'S OKAY. DYLAN... HE--

YES. HE IS VERY IMPRESSIVE. VERY DANGEROUS.

EH, TAKES AFTER HIS OLD MAN.

HEY. YOU THINK YOU COULD--

CAN'T GROW BACK. TOO MUCH DAMAGE, EDDIE.

OH.

BUT WE CAN STILL HELP.

GOOD TO BE BACK, EDDIE.

YEAH. GOOD TO BE BACK. NOW...

...HOW THE HELL DO WE GET HOME?

WAIT, HOW DO WE GET DAD HOME?

SO YEAH, THAT'S THE SIZE OF IT.

MORE OR LESS.

AS YOU CAN PROBABLY TELL, IT TOOK DYLAN A BIT TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO GET A CALL TO YOU GUYS.

THANKFULLY, LIZ STILL HAS SOME CONNECTIONS...

BUT YEAH... DYLAN AND I ARE STILL FIGURING ALL THIS OUT, YOU KNOW? STILL...A LOT TO UNPACK THERE.

I STILL... I DON'T KNOW...I HATE THAT I GAVE HIM THAT.

THAT HE HAS THAT IN HIM...

BUT THE KID TAUGHT ME SOMETHING TOO.

THAT YOU HAVE TO COME CLEAN. YOU GOTTA FACE UP TO THE THINGS YOU'VE DONE...

SO.

THIS IS THAT.

I NEED TO TELL YOU ALL WHAT'S GOING ON...

...BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE.

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I NEED TO TELL YOU ABOUT KNULL.

WHO?

WAIT, YOU KNOW THIS GUY?

ODIN'S BEARD.

AYE. IT'S BEST WE LET EDWARD SPEAK.

NICE TO SEE THE BEARD AGAIN, BROCK.

CAROL.

WHAT?

WHY DON'T YOU TAKE A BREATH, EDDIE?

WHAT IS THIS... "KNULL"?

IT'S...

IT'S BAD, CAP.

"I'LL TRY TO EXPLAIN THE BEST I CAN...BUT...IT'S MORE THAN JUST KNULL...

"MY OTHER CAN FEEL SOMETHING IN THE AIR...IN THE VIBRATIONS OF THE WEB SO TO SPEAK...

"IT'S ALL...CONNECTED IN WAYS I'M JUST BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND...

"I CAN'T...MAKE SENSE OF IT, BUT IT FEELS...

"IT FEELS LIKE...LIKE THE END OF THE WORLD IS ABOUT TO RAIN DOWN ON ALL OF US.

"THREATS FROM THE INSIDE AND THE OUT.

"THE OLD...

"...AND THE NEW.

"WHAT'S COMING FOR US NOW...I DON'T KNOW IF WE'LL SURVIVE IN ONE PIECE...

"IF WE SURVIVE IT AT ALL...

"YOU'VE ALL TRUSTED ME THIS FAR.

"AND FRANKLY I DON'T KNOW WHY...

"WHAT COMES NEXT IS GOING TO BE THE HARDEST THING WE'VE EVER FACED.

"BUT I PROMISE YOU THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING.

"BUT IF YOU'RE IN...

"...I AM TOO. SO, IF THIS IS IT...

"IF OUR FINAL DAYS ARE COMING...

"LET 'EM COME.

"AND THIS TIME...WE'LL FACE THEM...

"...TOGETHER."

FIN.

VENOM

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VC's CLAYTON COWLES LETTERER

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WELCOME, TRUE BELIEVERS, TO A TERRIFYING TALE FROM YESTERYEAR, IN WHICH WE JOIN EDDIE BROCK JUST DAYS AFTER HE THOUGHT HE HAD KILLED SPIDER-MAN, FULFILLING HIS DESTINY AS

VENOM

FLASHBACK

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN VENOM DID NOT EXIST.

WHEN EDDIE BROCK AND HIS ALIEN SYMBIOTE "OTHER" WERE AT PEACE.

...SURPRISES!

AHHHHH... PEACHES!

POP

BUT EVEN IN EDEN, THERE'S ROOM FOR...

PEACHES

Paradise

INTERRUPTED

DAVID MICHELINIE WRITER
RON LIM PENCILER J.P. MAYER INKER
ERICK ARCINIEGA COLOR ARTIST
VC'S CLAYTON COWLES LETTERER

YES, I KNOW YOU DON'T TAKE NOURISHMENT EXTERNALLY, BUT I DO.

AND WITH BRAINS AND SPLEENS OFF THE MENU, ONE LONGS FOR A DIET BEYOND MANGOES AND COCONUTS!

÷SIGH÷ I REMEMBER GROWING UP, AUNT MARTHA WOULD SERVE HER SPECIAL SEARED PEACHES FOR MY BIRTHDAY.

DEAR, DEAR AUNT MARTHA.

PERHAPS IF WE EVER RETURN TO THE MAINLAND WE SHOULD VISIT THE DOCTOR WHO MISDIAGNOSED HER CANCER.

AND EXPRESS OUR *DISAPPOINTMENT!*

AH, BUT THAT'S ANOTHER STORY. RIGHT NOW WE HAVE A FEAST TO PREPARE-- WHAT? NO.

I ABSOLUTELY *REFUSE* TO EMULATE MR. WEISSMULLER'S TRADEMARK HOWL!

THAT WOULD BE *SILLY.*

PLIP

BUT THEN...

VOICES? ON OUR ISLAND?!

IT SEEMS--

PLIP

--WE MAY HAVE TO POSTPONE OUR LITTLE NOSH!

NEARBY...

EASY WI' THAT CRATE, YA BLOODY @#$%!

THIS TECH STUFF WE NICKED FROM THAT MILITARY LAB IN SAN JUAN IS GONNA BRING A FORTUNE ON THE BLACK MARKET.

BUT ONLY IF IT STILL WORKS!

PROPERTY OF U.S. ARMY

PROPERTY OF U.S. ARMY

TRESPASSERS! EVEN HERE WE'RE HOUNDED BY UNWANTED MEDDLERS.

PERHAPS IF WE LEAVE THEM ALONE THEY'LL JUST...GO AWAY.

I--I DID GOOD, RIGHT, MR. MCKINNEY? I DID WHAT YOU SAID?

AYE, YA WERE A BIG HELP, GEORGIE. AS SHIFT BOSS FOR THE MINERS WHAT USTA WORK THIS PLACE YA KNOW WHICH TUNNELS ARE FREE O' GAS.

THE SAME STUFF WHAT KILLED MOST OF 'EM AN' SHUT THINGS DOWN. NOW LOCALS THINK THE ISLAND'S CURSED--

--WHICH MAKES IT THE PERFECT STASH HOUSE 'TIL WE SETTLE ON A BUYER!

NOW GET ALONG WI' YE. THIS IS THE LAST CRATE, AN' WE GOT PLACES TA GO, MONEY TA MAKE!

REACHES

YES, THEY'RE CRIMINALS, USERS WITHOUT SOULS.

AND WE HAVEN'T EVISCERATED ANYONE IN AGES!

BUT PRACTICALITY BEFORE PLEASURE.

IF THEY DISCOVER OUR PRESENCE, THEY COULD COMPROMISE OUR PRECIOUS PRIVACY.

BEST TO FOLLOW, MAKE SURE THEY FINISH THEIR FOUL ENTERPRISE AND LEAVE.

THEN THAT'S IT, MR. McKINNEY? WE'RE FINISHED, ALL DONE?

RIGHT AS RAIN, GEORGIE M'BOY.

DANGER! HIGH EXPLOSIVE

SO YOU'LL LET ME GO? Y-YOU PROMISED--!

I SAID YOU'D NEVER SEE ME AGAIN ONCE WE WERE THROUGH.

AN' A GENTLEMAN ALWAYS KEEPS HIS WORD!

SHZAK

THAT MAN WAS INNOCENT! A VICTIM OF BETRAYAL, JUST AS SPIDER-MAN BETRAYED US!

SUCH INJUSTICE CANNOT GO UNPUNISHED! FOR WE...ARE... *VEN--*

EH? B-BUT--! THAT'S RIGHT. WE AREN'T VENOM ANYMORE!

BUT WE MUST DO SOMETHING, *BE* SOMETHING! WE...ARE... WHAT?

VULNERABLE? NO, THAT'S CLEARLY WRONG!

VENISON? DON'T BE RIDICULOUS.

VENUS?! THAT'S A PLANET, FOR HEAVEN'S SA--

AH. YESSSSS! THAT'S PERFECT!

WE... ARE...

...VENGEANCE!

KDOOMP

HOLY CRAP, THE ISLAND *IS* CURSED! IT'S SOME KINDA DEMON!

TAKATAKATAK

ONLY KIND HE'S GONNA BE IS *DEAD!*

-TSK- SUCH WASTE, AND IN THIS UNSETTLED ECONOMY!

BULLETS ARE SO EXPENSIVE. HERE, WE'LL JUST--

-RECYCLE THEM!

-WHOONF-

THNK THNK THNK

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P-PLEASE! I WAS JUST FOLLOWIN' ORDERS!

ORDERS YOU CHOSE TO FOLLOW!

YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A HUMAN COCKROACH!

AND BUGS DESERVE TO BE--

PLIP PLIP

KRRRBMBLE

--SQUASHED!

SHZZZZATH

THIS LITTLE NUMBER'S PART O' THE TECH WE STOLE. SPEEDS UP MOLECULES 'TIL THEY POP.

HOW'S THAT FEEL, "DEMON"?

--TICKLES!

THWIP

IT... I-IT--

H-HEY THERE, BOYO, JUST A BLOODY MINUTE!

YA MAKE ME PULL THIS TRIGGER AN' IT'S MURDER!

FER ALL YER HIGH-TONE TALKIN' YA'D BE NO BETTER'N ME!

WORDS.

PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE IT BETTER IF WE JUST CALL IT--

E XPLOSIVES

--"IRONY!"

B-B-BOOOM

BUT AT LEAST THEY WON'T BE TELLING ANYONE WHERE THEIR "STASH" IS.

OF COURSE WE'LL HAVE TO MOVE THE YACHT AND SKIFF TO DEEP WATER AND SINK THEM. BUT THAT CAN WAIT.

A WISE MAN UNDERSTANDS THE VALUE OF ***PRIORITIES.***

THEREFORE, FIRST THINGS FIRST--

YES, IT'S TOO BAD THEY'RE ALL BURIED IN THE RUBBLE.

SUCH A SHAME TO WASTE SNACKS!

PEACHES!

THE END...FOR NOW!

THE RETURN OF Eddie's Clubhouse

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SEND E-MAILS TO **SPIDEYOFFICE@MARVEL.COM.** (PLEASE MARK "OKAY TO PRINT"!)

Hello, Venomaniacs! I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU MADE IT! You've survived a trip through the deadliest getaway this side of the Savage Land: VENOM ISLAND!

Way back in November of 2017, when Donny first sent me his pitch for his VENOM run, VENOM ISLAND was one of the stories we hoped we'd be able to tell after a big Carnage story we weren't even sure we'd get to. Luckily, we did--and VENOM ISLAND wasn't far behind!

In the character's thirty-year history, Venom's appearance in AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #347, written by David Michelinie and penciled by Erik Larsen, was a landmark for the character. The conclusion to a two-part story, #347 picked up right after Eddie Brock and the Venom symbiote had staged a daring prison break.

A violent and dangerous threat to Spider-Man since their inception, Venom took things to the next level after breaking free, immediately targeting Spidey with lethal intent. Theatrical as ever, Brock kidnapped Spider-Man and brought him to the very island featured in this story in the hopes of hunting him down and exacting justice against the web-slinging wonder the only way Venom knew how--lethally.

Spider-Man was able to escape with his life, but only by wrapping his costume around a charred skeleton he found on the island and fleeing for his life. For some time after, Venom was happy and lived on the island in peace, and the rest, as they say, is history.

If you haven't read that issue, put this one down RIGHT NOW and go back to your comic store and ask if they've got any copies of the facsimile edition we printed a few months ago in stock. Not only is it a great read and one of the most tense Spider-Man stories ever told and a great read, it's just a gorgeous reprint in and of itself! WHAT'RE YOU WAITING FOR?!

You back? AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #347 facsimile in hand? GOOD. Where was I? Right...

Returning to the island is only HALF of what makes this issue special! The other half is that it's a celebration of Donny and our collaborators' story reaching twenty-five issues--and as a part of that celebration, we decided to give you readers out there in Mighty Marveldom a little bit of extra story for this one. Not only is the main story of this issue thirty pages (AND WHAT WAS THAT INSANE STEGMAN DOUBLE-PAGE SPREAD TOWARD THE END?! WHAT'S THAT ALL ABOUT?!), but we also had ten pages of flashback goodness brought to you by none other than VENOM co-creator David Michelinie and his VENOM: LETHAL PROTECTOR collaborator Ron Lim!

Longtime Venom readers already know what a fan I am of David's work, and after reuniting him and Ron once waaay back in VENOM #150, it was a no-brainer to bring them together here. With none other than current VENOM inker J.P. Mayer bringing his skills to the entire issue and Erick Arciniega, who's lent a helping hand on a couple issues of VENOM ISLAND already, on colors, the short featured in this issue is one of my favorites that I've had a chance to work on in my time at the House of Ideas!

As if that weren't enough, we were lucky to enlist the artistic talents of Mark Bagley, one of the most prolific Spider-Man AND Venom illustrators of all time, to illustrate these five issues, and it's impossible to overstate how much Mark brings to the table. Donny and I have wanted to find an arc for Mark to join this volume of the series for months, and I think you'll agree that it was a real stroke of luck that he and inker Andy Owens (and OF COURSE series colorist Frank Martin and letterer Clayton Cowles) were able to join us!

But don't take my word for it--let's see what you readers have to say! This is the first letter column of 2020 and the mailbag is overflowing, so let's GOOOOOO!

Hey, Venomaniacs!

Venom is my favorite Marvel character of all time. I got into Eddie when I picked out VENOM: FIRST HOST #1, and I fell in love with Venom. I have read every issue of Donny's series. Donny Cates is my favorite Marvel writer and I am just loving this series. I have some questions.

1: I loved ABSOLUTE CARNAGE with all of my heart, and I am wondering when is Knull actually coming to Earth? And is it going to be an arc in the VENOM series, or an event?

2: This is my all-time favorite Marvel series, so please! Please don't let it end anytime soon!

3: Is Ryan Stegman coming back? He is my favorite Marvel artist ever and he just completes this series for me!

4: Please don't tell me the symbiote is gone AGAIN! First he was silenced, then it abandoned Eddie for Hulk in ABSOLUTE CARNAGE, now he is "dead"? Poor old Eddie.

5: Any chance of Flash Thompson coming back to life anytime soon? I absolutely LOVED Agent Venom and I wish he isn't dead.

Well thanks guys, and may all your symbiotes be gooey!

Hillary B.

Hey, Hillary! Thanks for your letter and your questions! Before diving into them, though, I gotta tell you how good it is to hear that you read VENOM: THE FIRST HOST, and went on to pick up the Venom series that followed. It's always terrific for us here at Marvel HQ to hear that our work has helped someone get into comics.

THAT SAID... Man, I sure HOPE Knull doesn't come to Earth anytime soon! Could you imagine the sort of calamity that would befall the heroes of the Marvel Universe if the Elder God of the Abyss and the progenitor of the symbiote species arrived on Earth with wrath in his heart and vengeance on his tongue?

That would probably be CRAZY!

Hey, Venom Office,

Shameful confession... I was never really a Venom fan--please don't burn me with fire--but when Donny Cates started writing VENOM, the owner of my LCS encouraged me to give it a chance and I reluctantly did.

I don't know why it has taken me so long to write in but I just finished issue #23 ("Venom Island," Part III) and man was it amazing. I think it is safe to say that I'm now a Venom fan.

This has legitimately become one of my most anticipated comics each month. Everything about this series is amazing. Loving the Dylan storyline and how it jerks us around so much not knowing if he's a good kid or off his rocker. Even though the series has already seen multiple artists the art has continually been engaging.

Thanks for such an amazing book. One question, and I know you can probably only be extremely vague about it, but: Is Dylan going to play a big role in stopping Knull?

Benjamin M.

Sorry, Benjamin. I STOPPED READING after you said you were never really a Venom fan!

Hi, VENOM HQ,

Quick note on VENOM #23:

As a Catholic myself, I don't like the idea of Eddie Brock no longer believing in God. Catholicism is in the DNA of the character, its right there in his origin story. This revelation just came off as silly since he calls upon Thor in

THE RETURN OF Eddie's Clubhouse

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the issue, who within the confines of 616 is still a god and not a long living alien like the MCU tends to portray. Sure, Eddie Brock has never been a saint, but to me it's ludicrous for him to not believe in divinity in 616, a place where Heaven and Hell exist. I don't have a problem with Eddie believing that no one is listening, as people of faith go through such periods. But for him to not believe in anything? Honestly I don't like it and don't buy it.

Otherwise I absolutely love the series and this is the only thing I've had to complain about in 23 issues! Looking forward to what happens next and hoping that Eddie returns to having faith once again.

So until the Venom Symbiote leaves Eddie Brock forever because it feels that Forbush Man is the perfect host, Make Mine Marvel!

Anthony "Sano" C.

Hey, Anthony, and thanks so much for reading and for writing in.

Totally hear where you're coming from here, and trust me when I say that Eddie's faith is still INTEGRAL to the character. As someone who tries to attend church regularly, I know how important it is to continue that journey through those crises of faith.

That said, I thought it was a pretty badass line, and more just about Eddie trapping the symbiote in a stormy part of the island and zapping him with a big ol' lightning bolt!

I hope that puts some of your concerns at ease!

And, hey, that Forbush Man idea ain't bad!

Dear VENOM team,

VENOM ISLAND is absolutely stunning so far!

I feel like we're getting back to the roots of the Brock/Venom character in so many great ways. Both emotionally in terms of motivations, as well as physically in terms of the settings. It's great how Carnage is like a bad tick that Brock just can't be rid of, especially as Knull continues to barrel towards Earth.

It was absolutely awesome to have Brock invited to meet (and one day join) the Avengers. Especially this newest incarnation at Avengers Mountain that I'm really enjoying in their own title. I know Flash joined the Avengers as Venom, but Brock finally getting his due somehow feels more important to me, like the REAL Venom is finally getting his due (I loved the Flash run as Venom, but he was always a stand in for me: a GREAT stand-in who had some amazing stories, but still not Brock). And I agree with Danvers: I liked the beard too.

Thanks for a great story, Cates, and great art, Bagley! I'm looking forward to seeing what's to come with the Island, the remnants of Carnage/Grendel, and eventually Knull.

I'm also REALLY looking forward to the big reveals yet to come with Dylan. Thanks for an epic Venom run thus far!

Andrew
Alexandria, Virginia

Thanks for your letter, Andrew! Great to hear you're digging what we're doing so far. I think you'll like where we go next!

Cates, Stegman, and the Rest of Team Venom,

I have been a fan of Spider-Man since I knew what a comic was. I'm gonna be 26 this year and for as long as I've been into comics...I've loved Venom.

Still to this day he is my favorite comic character; and with what this new Venom team is doing today...I'm blown away. Volume 4 is some of the best story work I have seen for Venom. Then to top that off, Carnage gets brought back in the most epic way. ABSOLUTE CARNAGE was one of best stories I've ever read. I can truly not wait to see what's next for Eddie, Carnage, and Knull. I've never been this interested in a story arc before. I can't wait to see what happens in VENOM #23.

Thank you for making me love comics again, you guys.

Brandøn A.

Hey, Brandon! Thanks so much for reading and for writing! It's great to hear that you're so excited about what we've done and what's to come--truly, a VENOMANIAC if ever there was one!

Hey VENOM Team,

I just read my copy of VENOM #22, and "Venom Island" is an incredible storyline. The way Donny Cates and Mark Bagley have designed it is awesome, seeing Eddie be invited to join the Avengers was something new but makes sense. And with Eddie absorbing many symbiotes, has the imposing threat of Knull.

I can't wait to see what happens next, how Knull arrives, and how Eddie gets his hand back. Keep the fantastic storytelling up, we all know you will.

Sincerely,
Nicholas R.

WOW THERE IS A LOT OF TALK ABOUT KNULL COMING TO EARTH IN ALL THESE LETTERS.

WEIRD.

Holy heck! "Venom Island" is an awesome story. I hate that I have to wait so long for the next chapter. I can't wait to see Venom fight the God. With or without the Avengers?!?!

Good job, Cates and Bagley!

Lenny B.

You guys are REALLY HUNG UP ON THIS KNULL GUY.

Hello Venom Writers!

I just finished issue #22 and I am loving VENOM ISLAND! It is the perfect Venom story... with adventure, suspense and grit. I can't wait until Knull arrives on Earth. I have a few questions:

1. After the events of 2099 wrap up, will Venom and Spidey cross paths?
2. Will Venom join the new SCREAM in her adventures?
3. When will we get to see the Ultimate Universe Venom (hinted in issue #20)?

Thank you,
Ryan

Hey, Ryan! Finally someone in this letter column who isn't talking about this "Knull" guy! While we don't have any plans to revisit 2099 in the near future (I mean, it's 79 years away, for cryin' out loud!), there ARE plans for VENOM and SCREAM to cross paths in July in a story that takes place between VENOM ISLAND and our next arc, VENOM BEYOND!

I love that SCREAM: THE CURSE OF CARNAGE book A TON, and it keeps getting better!

Team Venom,

Wow! Just finished Part 2 of "Venom Island"!

What a twist at the end! Eddie really does care about his other. There's so many twists, I can't wait 'til Part 3. Hopefully Eddie gets off the island soon though as Knull is still coming!

So well written by Donny Cates, his VENOM run is one of my most enjoyable series.

From Tom H.
Plymouth

Okay, okay, okay...the last two issues (VENOM #20 and VENOM #21) might be the best back-to-back VENOM issues ever! I mean, the Maker, the Council of Reeds, Carnage alive--my mind is blown!

Although Eddie might be biting off more than he can chew trying to take Carnage one-on-one. Let's see, I feel Cap is gonna break in at the right moment and kick some ***.

THE RETURN OF Eddie's Clubhouse

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Bravo for Mark Bagley taking Eddie's beard in #21. I felt it was the correct opening stanza for him to take, it just felt new. And besides, it's MARK ****** BAGLEY, one of the greatest to ever do it!

I'm excited to see the many different offshoots of this book, excited to see how the 1610 is gonna work itself in with the synthetic symbiote. I always felt 1610 Carnage wasn't given a long enough reign, but if the Maker can bring it through...Earth-Prime, TAKE COVER and watch your -redacted-!!!!!

G
Denver, CO.

Dear "Isn't Eddie Dreamy" Teamy,

It is great to see Bagley back drawing VENOM, even though he will probably only appear at the end of this story arc.

I'm honestly surprised Dylan survived ABSOLUTE CARNAGE. When the previews for "Venom Island" were announced, I guessed Dylan was killed and Eddie either banished himself to the island or was capture by an unknown or new organization (Knull worshippers, Maker's men or the Life Foundation 2.0), but with Dylan still around I can't wait to see what is in store for him. Please tell me there is a secret abandoned hero/villain/scientist base on the island that Eddie will stumble across and use to battle the Carnage symbiote.

I am thoroughly enjoying Cates' "Lord of the Flies with symbiotes" storyline. Now for the question/comment part of the letter:

- Can we have a tease or name drop of the next story arc for VENOM after "Venom Island"? If the answer is yes what is it? If the answer is no what is it?

- Will Venom appear in any crossover events not VENOM-centric? Like Venom helping Spider-Man fight that Kindred thing?

- Would the Venom symbiote be able to wield Mjolnir?

- Please bring back Rex! He could be in the 2020 VENOM ANNUAL called the "Rex Files." Where we follow him doing research for symbiotes and trying to blend in being human.

- VENOM 2099 #1 was AWESOME! Please make that an ongoing!

- Will Venom be taking the fight to Knull before it arrives? Maybe building a ragtag team going into space to defeat the God of symbiotes?

Until Donny Cates writes ALL comics at Marvel Comics, Make Mine a Marvel.

Travis J.

All right, Travis, you've got a lotta questions, so let's see if we can hit 'em fast--lightning round! Ready? GO!

- YES! The next arc will be called "Venom Beyond," and BELIEVE ME, it lives up to its name!

- YES! Venom will play a special part in this spring's EMPYRE story and is also a regular member of the SAVAGE AVENGERS team!

- PROBABLY NOT!

- "Rex Files" is a pretty fun story title! But sadly, Rex is long, long gone. Believe me, I wish we could see him again down the road, but you know what they say: "Everyone stays dead in comics except Uncle Ben."

- All credit for that gem should go to Danny Khazem (who edited that story) and the creative team of Jody Houser, Francesco Mobili, Geraldo Borges, Rachelle Rosenberg, and Clayton Cowles!

- YOU PEOPLE AND YOUR KNULL!

Hey Team Venom!

Am I the only one who doesn't miss the beard? Anyway, the Avengers possible invitation for Brock is well deserved after all these years and his reaction was priceless!

...until Carnage showed up, so it's time to throw down!

I can't wait to see Eddie vs. the Carnage symbiote on the legendary Isla de Huesos, A.K.A. the Island of Bones!!! What a classic battleground from the past! Major points for that! However, after the events of ABSOLUTE CARNAGE, the Carnage symbiote seems more unstoppable than ever, so I have no idea how this showdown will go... and I love that! "We" can't wait for issue #2!

Keep up the awesome work!

–George D

All right, Venophiles, that's all the space we've got for this one!

Coming up next in the Venomverse is WEB OF VENOM: WRAITH! Featuring your favorite space cowboy as he hunts down his Exolon God (sounds spooky! Maybe that has something to do with that Knull guy y'all were talking about?) across the galaxy. And, best of all, it's on sale in JUST THREE WEEKS!

And THREE DAYS LATER, it's the BEST DAY OF THE YEAR: FREE COMIC BOOK DAY!

YOUR LOCAL COMIC BOOK SHOP WILL LITERALLY BE GIVING COMICS AWAY!

LIKE, FOR FREE!

And, AND!, your favorite slobbering symbiote stars in this year's offerings, including a special story introducing an all-new foe...VIRUS! DON'T MISS IT! And while you're there, remember to tell your comic shop that you want the best, and the best is VENOM!

Until then, stay sharp!
Devin
3.11.2020

WEB OF VENOM: WRAITH 1

FREE COMIC BOOK DAY: SPIDER-MAN/VENOM 1